

MALI LIVESTOCK INITIATIVE AND PASTORALIST (MLPI-2)

Producers Organizations in the North of Mali

Interim Report
adm

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Introduction

The farmers' organizations (OP) are amongst the most important and legitimate actors that should promote agricultural development in poor countries. These organizations are voluntarily formed by socio-professional groups in a formal or informal manner (producers' organizations, cooperatives, cooperative unions, federations) and they operate in different domains.

The OPs constitute a base for collective actions and can play an important role in ensuring that the interests of poor people are taken into consideration by the government. In practice, the majority of these lobbying groups undertake collective actions. For a while there has been more organization on the part of rural populations for the defense of their interests.

This report examines how the OPs of herders are formed, their roles and responsibilities, the services they provide their members, the information they need, the use of this information, and the limitations and opportunities they face. The report makes suggestions so that the OP can better represent the interests of their members and lobby for a development policy that takes into account the small producers. The report will try to highlight the potential of the OP in the poverty reduction process.

Objectives

The main objective of this work is to understand how the herders' organizations of the northern region of Mali allow their members to have access to inputs and information in order to influence development decisions. To do this, the work consists of:

- a list of organizations and support structures in the zone ;
- the collective activities of the organizations
- The governance of the organizations

Methodological approach

To reach these objectives, the study prioritized a participative process using focus group interviews, individual interviews with members of the organizations and interviews with resource people. The study area covered three administrative regions (Mopti, Tombouctou and Gao) that correspond to the best herding zones in the country.

In each of the three regions, the circles were identified with the help of government technical offices, in each circle communes were selected and in each commune villages with a significant livestock market were selected for the interviews and surveys. The interviews happened in each village with groups of women's and men's organizations whose principal activity was herding. In addition to group interviews, in each village three herders were individually interviewed (one leader from the herder's organization, one member of the men's group, and one member of the women's group). A resource person was interviewed in each market to have a global vision of the organizations that exist in the area.

The information collected was analyzed using segmentation grids of different organizations in relation to the existing support structures, goals, strengths and weaknesses, gender, etc...

Results and discussion

Political influence on the development of OPs

The development policies promote certain producers groups, products and areas relative to others (rice and cotton initiatives, etc...). These political biases stem from the power and influence of various organizations (Union of Producers of the ON, Union of Cotton producers, FBEVIM, etc...), from the relative importance of the product for the country (rice, cotton, livestock, etc...), from the level of the price on the market, or from a combination of these different elements.

The different development policies don't affect the different organizations to the same degree, despite the goodwill of the decision makers. In this vein, the herders' organizations in the North of Mali are often on the margin of decisions because of their distance from the principal production and consumption zones, and their lack of information. Also, their structure and level of organization does not give them negotiation and lobbying power with the partners or government to consider their grievances. All of the organizations found are in the first stage of organization (association), very few are at the cooperative level. The following table gives the structure of the organizations surveyed and their importance.

Table 1 : Status of organizations identified in the villages

	Cooperative		Association		Federation		Economic Interest Group		Group total	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Facala	2	25	6	75					8	100
Djenne	1	16,7	5	83,3					6	100
Madiama	1	20	4	80					5	100
Gao			18	90	2	10			20	100
Goumzoureye	2	18,2	9	81,8					11	100
Soni Aliber	1	3,8	25	96,2					26	100
Tonka	2	8,3	22	91,7					24	100
Gossi	1	1,3	79	98,8					80	100
Ansongo	32	59,3	21	38,9			1	1,9	54	100
Bara	1	4,3	21	91,3	1	4,3			23	100
Konna	9	30	21	70					30	100
Fatoma	1	7,1	13	92,9					14	100
Madougou	1	25	3	75					4	100
Koro	2	40	3	60					5	100
Group total	56	18,1	250	80,6	3	1	1	,3	310	100

In total, 310 organizations were identified in the villages surveyed and 80.6% of these organizations are associations, 18.1% are cooperatives, 0.3% are economic interest groups and 1% are part of a federation. Cooperatives are advanced forms of organization with a legal body. They are more numerous in the Ansongo and Mopti circles, but proportionally, cooperatives are more prevalent in the communes of Ansongo, Konna and Koro. Associations are more frequent in the communes of Gossi, Soni Ali Ber and Fatoma.

An analysis of this situation leads to the understanding that the high number of associations in the different villages can be explained by the lack of information on the part of members

and the distrust of the organizations. Currently the Regional Agriculture Offices are working to move the organizations towards becoming cooperatives so that they can have a legal body and can benefit from credit.

We notice from the table above that the efforts of the Agriculture Offices have not made a difference yet in the northern regions of the country. Investigations and investments should be made in this vein in these three regions. The following table gives a summary of the type of organizations and their level of representation.

Table 2 : An overview of the organizations surveyed in the three study regions

Organization	Status of the organization	Scale of the organization	Type
Cooperatives and organizations	Formal	National	Federation (FEBEVIM)
		Regional	Union of Cooperatives
		Local	Herders cooperatives
			Women's associations
Associations	Informal	Local	Traditional

Producers' organizations can develop formally as federations, cooperative unions, cooperatives, and village associations. A federation is at the national level, a cooperative union at the regional level, and cooperatives and associations at the local level. Informally, only groups and associations can develop. In villages, we still find many informal organizations that lack official documents that permit them to exist or conduct activities.

However, enormous efforts are under way on the part of by PTF, donors, political parties, Non Governmental Organizations (ONG) and often religious organizations to develop herders organizations (opening input stores, training leaders, access to credit, etc). But these different entities have differing strategies and approaches. This explains the multitude of organizations and their mediocre performance.

The size of organizations

Various organizations carry out activities to reach the objectives they set for themselves. The larger organizations (unions, federations) are capable of significantly influencing the policies while taking into consideration the opportunities and the livelihoods of their members. Certain herder's organizations know of the FEBEVIM, an umbrella organization that promotes production and commercialization activities of products and by-products of herders in Mali. This new organization is not well enough established and its activities are currently limited to establishing frameworks for the different actors in its sector. The following table gives the structure of the organizations and their members.

Table 3 : Average number of members by governing body in the villages

	Board of directors	Oversight Committee	General Assembly	Literate Board of Directors	Literate Oversight Committee	Literate General Assembly
Facala	12	5	162	5	3	26
Djenne	6	4	53	5	2	14
Madiama	11	3	110	4	0	8
Gao	12	3	56	8	3	26
Goumzoureye	8	4	47	4	3	15
Soni Aliber	5	3	28	3	2	13
Tonka	10	2	48	5	1	13
Gossi	11	3	39	6	2	10
Ansongo	7	4	32	5	3	18
Bara	6	5	29	5	4	16
Konna	17	4	.	4	2	.
Fatoma	14	3	.	3	2	0
Madougou	0	2	79	3	2	.
Koro	.	.	33	7	6	.
Group total	10	3	50	5	2	16

The organizations surveyed in the study are relatively small (50 members on average). Each organization is made up of a board of directors, an oversight committee and a general assembly. The number of members in these groups varies, but in general there are 10 people in the board of directors and three for the oversight committee. Few of the members of the governing bodies are literate. On average, only 16 people per group are literate, 5 people in the board of directors and 2 in the oversight committee.

The table shows that the number of members is highest in the communes of Facala and Madiama in the circle of Djenné and lowest in communes in the regions of Gao and Tombouctou (Bara, Ansongo, Soni Ali Ber, Gossi, Tombouctou and Gounzoureye). These organizations also have lower numbers of literate members than their peers in the Mopti region. This situation is reflective of the low level of schooling in the northern regions due to a high prevalence of nomads in the herding communities.

The level of instruction in the organizations

The level of instruction of members of an organization affects the performance of the organization as well as the degree to which it is open to innovation. The following table gives the proportion of members of the governing bodies of organizations who are literate.

Table 4 : Literacy rates by type of governing body in the village (in %)

	Board of Directors	Oversight committee	General Assembly
Facala	56,54	54,46	24,52
Djenne	72,22	55,00	25,49
Madiama	43,81	8,33	12,28
Gao	70,82	87,04	57,03
Goumzoureye	53,77	70,83	44,41

Soni Aliber	65,00	62,50	45,14
Tonka	47,90	62,50	28,46
Gossi	58,45	80,00	30,46
Ansongo	70,49	72,35	74,84
Bara	91,67	81,25	60,55
Konna	26,84	58,33	.
Fatoma	32,09	70,00	,00
Group total	57,51	69,04	45,25

On average 57% of members of the board of directors of organizations, 69% of the members of the oversight committee and 45% of members are literate. These average rates vary from commune to commune, as can be seen in the table above. The rates are lowest in the regions where nomadism dominates (Tombouctou and Gao) as compared to transhumance (Mopti).

Educating children is tedious in nomadic communities because they move throughout the year in search of pastures and water points for animals, making educating children difficult.

In terms of structure, there is no difference between cooperatives and associations (the same governing bodies exist in the two organizations). However, it is important to note that cooperatives have receipts in addition to rules and regulations, and thus a legal body that associations lack.

The members of the different organizations surveyed have a low level of education and this hinders the activities they set out to accomplish. Meetings aren't held in accordance with prescribed rules, the leaders are not chosen according to ability and the actions are not defined. Generally, activities are dictated by the government offices that are in charge of helping them.

Functioning of organizations

The farmers' organizations hold meetings in order to respond to the needs of members. The sessions are held by governing body. The table below gives the frequency of the sessions of different governing bodies in the study zone.

Table 5 : Frequency of sessions by type of governing body in the villages (by year)

	Board of Directors	Oversight committee	General Assembly
Facala	7	11	2
Djenne	5	4	3
Madiama	19	6	3
Gao	15	14	2
Goumzoureye	12	13	2
Soni Aliber	21	19	2
Tonka	2	2	3
Gossi	9	6	1
Ansongo	3	3	3
Bara	3	3	3
Konna	3	3	3
Fatoma	23	22	23
Madougou	3	.	1

Koro	4	3	1
Group total	9	8	3

Globally, the board of directors holds 9 sessions a year, which is less than one session per month. A board of directors should meet at least once a month in the regular session. The oversight committees meet on average 8 months in the year, and like the board of directors, they should meet at least once a month.

The general assemblies' convened 3 times on average during the year. This is normal, as one meeting before planting season, one meeting during the season, and one at the end is expected.

Often the lack of meetings is linked to a problem (lack of funds, the arrival of inspectors, etc). A handful of people decide for the organization either because they are the most educated or because they have a higher social position in the community (village chief, religious leader, etc). As mentioned above, the heads of organizations are not chosen for their intrinsic value, and they push their opinions about ways of governing and decision making on the group.

The organizations present the assessment of the end of exercise to their members as prescribed. We wonder whether the members are capable of discerning the subtleties of the assessments because they are often not educated and illiterate. The assessments are presented only to conform to norms; their content and accuracy need to be verified.

The following table shows the efficacy of governing bodies of organization in the villages studied.

Table 6 : Frequency of the presentation of year end assessments by governing bodies

	Yes		No		Group Total	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Facala	4	100			4	100
Djene	2	100			2	100
Madiama	3	100			3	100
Gao	8	88,9	1	11,1	9	100
Goumzoureye	8	100			8	100
Soni Aliber	4	100			4	100
Tonka	15	100			15	100
Gossi	12	100			12	100
Ansongo	17	100			17	100
Bara	8	100			8	100
Konna	6	100			6	100
Fatoma	12	100			12	100
Madougou	2	40	3	60	5	100
Koro	1	25	3	75	4	100
Group total	102	93,6	7	6,4	109	100

We note in the table that almost 94% of organizations studied present a year end assessment to their members, or 102 of 109. However, the majority of organizations in the circle of Koro do not present assessments to their members. This could be explained in part by the reasons mentioned above: the low level of schooling of leaders of governing bodies and the informal

nature of the organizations.

The largest portion of informal organizations (associations and traditional groups) that do not have legal documents are in the circle of Koro. The information collected by the studies on the ground shows that enthusiasm for training is still weak in the circle for several reasons including the closed mindedness of the beneficiaries and the lack of agents.

The same observation is made in regards to the presentation of business plans before the start of activities. The table below gives the frequency of the presentation of business plans by members of the governing bodies to members.

Table 7 : Frequency of presentation of organizational business plans before execution

	Yes		Non		Group total	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Facala	4	100			4	100
Djenne	2	100			2	100
Madiama	3	100			3	100
Gao	9	100			9	100
Goumzoureye	8	100			8	100
Soni Aliber	4	100			4	100
Tonka	15	100			15	100
Gossi	12	100			12	100
Ansongo	17	100			17	100
Bara	8	100			8	100
Konna	6	100			6	100
Fatoma	12	100			12	100
Madougou	5	100			5	100
Koro	3	75	1	25	4	100
Total	108	99,1	1	,9	109	100

Almost all of the organizations state having presented their activity programs before executing them. Once again, this is a requirement of the texts of organizational management. The circle of Koro and more specifically the commune of Koro is still the one in which none of the organizations presented their programs.

The behavior of the governing bodies of different organizations in the study area leads us to wonder how they were formed. The manner in which they were established counts a lot in terms of governance. The following table gives an idea of the general way in which the groups in the study area were formed.

Table 8 : The ways in which organizations were formed

	Dues		Donations		Loans		Service Provided		Dues/ donations		Dues/ loans		Group total	
	Total	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%
Facala	3	75									1	25	4	100
Djenne	1	50							1	50			2	100

Madiama	2	66							1	33,3			3	100
Gao	9	100											9	100
Goumzour eye	7	87									1	12,5	8	100
Soni Aliber	4	100											4	100
Tonka	11	73							4	26,7			15	100
Gossi	10	83							2	16,7			12	100
Ansongo	15	88			2	11,8							17	100
Bara	7	87					1	12,5					8	100
Konna	6	100											6	100
Fatoma	9	75	1	8,3	2	16,7							12	100
Madougou	4	80			1	20							5	100
Koro	3	75							1	25,0			4	100
Group total	91	83	1	,9	5	4,6	1	,9	9	8,3	2	1,8	109	100

The organizations are generally formed on member donations. 83% of the organizations in the study area were started by member contributions. Certain organizations also receive gifts from partners (NGOs, projects, etc). Other groups borrow money for activities; this encouraging practice is unfortunately not widespread enough. Only about 5% of the organizations use loans for their activities; they are most prevalent in the Koro circle.

Organizational heritage

Organizations are generally poor throughout Mali. Their funds are insufficient and their income comes most often from NGOs or projects that help them. The following table gives the number of organizations with liabilities in the study area.

Table 9 : Infrastructure possession

	Yes		No		Group total	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Facala	3	75	1	25	4	100
Djenne	2	100			2	100
Madiama	1	33,3	2	66,7	3	100
Gao	1	11,1	8	88,9	9	100
Goumzoureye	5	62,5	3	37,5	8	100
Soni Aliber	1	25	3	75	4	100
Tonka	2	13,3	13	86,7	15	100
Gossi	12	100			12	100
Ansongo	6	35,3	11	64,7	17	100
Bara	2	25	6	75	8	100
Konna			6	100	6	100
Fatoma			12	100	12	100
Madougou	2	40	3	60	5	100
Koro	1	25	3	75	4	100
Group total	38	34,9	71	65,1	109	100

The following table tells us that almost 35% of organizations state having liabilities. These numbers are certainly higher for organizations that work with projects or NGOs.

Infrastructure value

	Value		
	Minimum	Average	Median
Facala	1400000	7900000	10800000
Djenne	60000	4330000	4330000
Madiama	150000	150000	150000
Gao	75000	75000	75000
Goumzoureye	16000	465250	112500
Soni Aliber	60000	60000	60000
Gossi	60000	6555650	600000
Ansongo	500000	13366667	4500000
Bara	7718151	30359076	30359076
Group total	16000	7940373	975000

Associations and herders cooperatives exist whose aim is: access to livestock food, livestock vaccination, bourgou and infrastructure (vaccination area, slaughter area and livestock market) management, and access to credit for feed. The expanse of the country and the lack of public finances do not permit the state to satisfy each organizations needs equally. Partner interventions should happen in the areas where the state and public service intervention is weak. Most often, organizations are provided with livestock feed and training for members. The organizations are often created within the scope of capacity of their members, which leads to organizations that are limited by membership constraints, the areas and scope of their interventions. To improve their activities, OPs should be:

- open and accessible to all actors
- democratic
- efficient and pertinent in establishing and obtaining their goals.

Recently, the government and donors are encouraging the increased participation of OPs in the formulation of agricultural development policy and are helping the groups build capacity. But an institutional sector that recognizes the importance of organizations and allows them to express their problems at local, national and international levels should be encouraged.

Power dynamics in the organizations

There are both formal and non formal organizations in villages which are either single sex or mixed. These groups are run by a limited number of beneficiaries that extract a maximum amount of benefit (the board of directors does not meet, there is no assessment/review, and no management documents in most cases). The poorest in these organizations often heavily influenced by the more affluent members because even though the poor are in the majority, they are incapable of identifying their constraints, to express their needs and allow for their grievances to be heard. This explains the failures of different reforms undertaken by partners. These power dynamics exist in communities resistant to change for different reasons:

- the wide dispersion of rural population limits their efforts to make claims
- social relations between members ;
- the information constraints in rural zones

Veterinary product providers

	Private veterinarian		Veterinary Pharmacy		Agent		Business		Group total	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Facala	1	25,0	2	50,0	1	25,0			4	100
Djenne			2	100					2	100
Madiama			3	100					3	100
Gao	1	11,1	8	88,9					9	100
Goumzoureye			3	37,5			5	62,5	8	100
Soni Aliber			4	100					4	100
Tonka							15	100,0	15	100
Gossi					11	91,7	1	8,3	12	100
Ansongo			11	64,7			6	35,3	17	100
Bara			6	75,0			2	25,0	8	100
Madougou	1	100							1	100
Group total	3	3,6	39	47,0	12	14,5	29	34,9	83	100

The types of organizations

There are several different types of organizations that can be distinguished by their form and function. In the northern regions of Mali, the type of organization found most often are listed in the table below.

Association type

	Men's		Women's		Mixed		Group total	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Facala	2	25,0			6	75,0	8	100
Djenne	4	66,7			2	33,3	6	100
Madiama	2	40,0			3	60,0	5	100
Gao	1	5,0	14	70,0	5	25,0	20	100
Goumzoureye	2	18,2	5	45,5	4	36,4	11	100
Soni Aliber	7	26,9	13	50,0	6	23,1	26	100
Tonka	1	4,2	22	91,7	1	4,2	24	100
Gossi	30	37,5	40	50,0	10	12,5	80	100
Ansongo	10	18,5	27	50,0	17	31,5	54	100
Bara	1	4,3	8	34,8	14	60,9	23	100
Konna	3	10,0	22	73,3	5	16,7	30	100
Fatoma	1	7,1	13	92,9			14	100
Madougou			3	75,0	1	25,0	4	100
Koro	2	40,0	3	60,0			5	100
Group total	66	21,3	170	54,8	74	23,9	310	100

No matter the type of the organization, they are a way for members to voice or satisfy a need that they couldn't do alone. But because the organizations are so poor, they rely almost solely on the state to help them meet their goals. No organization in the area is able to finance their own trainings or projects. For this reason, certain organizations have timidly

started to organize in larger, more representative groups. The following table gives the level of representation of different organizations.

Level of representation

	National		Regional		Local		Group total	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Facola			1	12,5	7	87,5	8	100
Djenne					6	100	6	100
Madiama			1	20,0	4	80,0	5	100
Gao	1	5,0	2	10,0	17	85,0	20	100
Goumzoureye					11	100	11	100
Soni Aliber					26	100	26	100
Tonka					24	100	24	100
Gossi					80	100	80	100
Ansongo	9	16,7	5	9,3	40	74,1	54	100
Bara			6	26,1	17	73,9	23	100
Konna					30	100	30	100
Fatoma					14	100	14	100
Madougou					4	100	4	100
Koro					5	100	5	100
Group total	10	3,2	15	4,8	285	91,9	310	100

In the three study regions, 3% of organizations are members of an organization recognized at the national level and 4% at the regional level. This points to their weak integration and explains their weak performance in obtaining their objectives. These groups that function alone can't adequately respond to the needs of their members without being trained in group dynamics and organizational management. The following table gives the areas of intervention of the groups in the study area.

Areas of activity of organizations

	Herding		Agriculture		Reforestation		Handicrafts		Fishing		Commerce		Peace-Building		Group total	
	Tot.	%	Tot.	%	Tot.	%	Tot.	%	Tot.	%	Tot.	%	Tot.	%	Tot.	%
Facola	3	37,5	3	37,5					1	12,5	1	12,5			8	100,0
Djenne	2	33,3	1	16,7					1	16,7	1	16,7	1	16,7	6	100,0
Madiama	3	60,0	1	20,0									1	20,0	5	100,0
Gao	9	45,0	3	15,0									8	40,0	20	100,0
Goumzoureye	7	63,6	1	9,1									3	27,3	11	100,0
Soni Aliber	7	26,9	6	23,1	1	3,8							12	46,2	26	100,0
Tonka	10	41,7	10	41,7	4	16,7									24	100,0
Gossi	33	41,3	12	15,0					2	2,5	2	2,5	31	38,8	80	100,0
Ansongo	16	30,8	10	19,2	6	11,5			10	19,2	1	1,9	9	17,3	52	100,0
Bara	7	30,4	10	43,5	2	8,7			2	8,7			2	8,7	23	100,0
Konna	10	41,7	3	12,5							6	25,0	5	20,8	24	100,0
Fatoma	11	78,6	2	14,3			1	7,1							14	100,0
Madougou	1	11,1	4	44,4									4	44,4	9	100,0
Koro	1	12,5	2	25,0									5	62,5	8	100,0

Group total	120	38,7	68	21,9	13	4,2	1	,3	16	5,2	11	3,5	81	26,1	310	100,0
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The highest areas of intervention are herding, peace building and agriculture. This corresponds with the activities in the regions. The area has been recognized for its excellence in herding, and for some time, access to livestock food and water have been principal constraints. With the insecurity of populations and their goods, they are obligated to organize defensively and obtain the support of the state or development partners. The population is composed of nomads and sedentary groups and practices agriculture to satisfy the primary needs of the community. More specifically, the most peace building groups exist in the region of Tombouctou and Gao where the population studied is mostly nomadic. On the other hand, the communities in the Mopti region are more sedentary and more inclined towards agriculture. Livestock is the principal source of wealth in all regions studied. Amongst the herders groups, there are women's groups, as indicated in the following table.

Number of herding groups and women's herding groups par commune

	Number of herding groups	Number of women's groups that work on herding activities
Facala	3	0
Djenne	2	0
Madiama	3	0
Gao	9	2
Goumzoureye	7	5
Soni Aliber	7	2
Tonka	10	3
Gossi	33	6
Ansongo	16	7
Bara	7	2
Konna	10	1
Fatoma	11	1
Madougou	1	0
Koro	1	0
Group total	120	29

The table shows us that among 120 herders' organizations in the area only 29, or 24%, are women's groups. This weak representation of women's groups is mostly due to the lack of outreach aimed at women, their low level of education, their weak representation in decision making processes, etc...

However, the number of women's organizations that do herding is highest in Tombouctou and Gao regions where projects and NGOs that financially support organizations is higher. The table indicates that in the Mopti region the number of women's herders organizations is low compared to those of Gao and Tombouctou.

The main reason is because of the diversity of women's activities in the region, the weak of number of support structures for women in the areas and their limited access to new innovations.

To reach their objectives, organizations buy livestock feed, medicine, fodder, etc... Their suppliers often aren't able to satisfy the demand. There are multiple reasons for this.

Acquiring livestock feed

The organizations receive livestock feed from several sources, of which the largest are mentioned in the following table.

Livestock feed providers

	Chamber of Agriculture		Businesses		Huicoma		Group total	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Facala	1	25,0	2	50,0	1	25,0	4	100
Djenne	1	50,0	1	50,0			2	100
Madiama			2	66,7	1	33,3	3	100
Gao			9	100			9	100
Goumzoureye			8	100			8	100
Soni Aliber			4	100			4	100
Tonka			15	100			15	100
Gossi			12	100			12	100
Ansongo			17	100			17	100
Bara			8	100			8	100
Madougou			1	100			1	100
Group total	2	2,4	79	95,2	2	2,4	83	100

The herders organizations receive the majority of livestock feed from traders who operate in their areas (95.2%). The Regional Chambers of Agriculture also supply livestock feed to certain member organizations. This is specific to Djenné (communes of Facala, Djenné and Madiama). If it occurs in other circles, it is very limited in scope.

The organizations do not benefit from this type of support from the Permanent Assembly of Agriculture Chambers (APCAM). This can perhaps be explained by the privatization of Huicoma and the weak cotton production since the reform of the CMDT (Malian Company for the Development of Textiles).

The livestock feed sold on the market comes from Burkina Faso and small quantities from local oilseed processors that can only process small amounts. This limits the actions of APCAM for acquiring the livestock feed to the member organizations like in the past.

The demand for livestock feed by herders organizations is not always filled. The following table gives the levels of satisfaction of organizations for demand for livestock feed.

All the demand for livestock feed is met

	Yes		No		Group Total	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Facala	2	50,0	2	50,0	4	100
Djenne	1	50,0	1	50,0	2	100
Madiama	2	66,7	1	33,3	3	100
Gao	8	88,9	1	11,1	9	100
Goumzoureye	6	100			6	100
Soni Aliber	3	75,0	1	25,0	4	100

Tonka			15	100	15	100
Gossi	3	25,0	9	75,0	12	100
Ansongo	13	76,5	4	23,5	17	100
Bara	3	37,5	5	62,5	8	100
Konna			6	100	6	100
Fatoma			12	100	12	100
Madougou	1	100			1	100
Koro			1	100	1	100
Group total	42	42,0	58	58,0	100	100

La satisfaction des demandes en aliment bétail des organisations est moins que de moitié (42%). Cette non satisfaction des demandes est liée à la non disponibilité du produit d'une part et d'autre part au prix du produit. Cependant, les communes de la région de Gao ont le plus souvent leurs demandes satisfaites à plus de la moitié. Le tableau suivant donne les raisons de non satisfaction des demandes en aliment bétail des organisations.

Less than half (42%) of the demand for livestock feed is met. This is due to the lack of availability of the product on the one hand and the price of the product on the other hand. However, the communes in the Gao region have their demand met more than half of the time. The following table gives the reasons the demand is not met.

Reasons the demand for livestock feed is not met

	High price of livestock feed		High demand		Group total	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Facola	2	100			2	100
Djenne			1	100	1	100
Madiama	1	100			1	100
Gao			1	100	1	100
Soni Aliber	1	100			1	100
Tonka	6	50,0	6	50,0	12	100
Gossi	6	66,7	3	33,3	9	100
Ansongo	4	100			4	100
Bara	5	100			5	100
Konna	6	100			6	100
Fatoma	12	100			12	100
Koro	1	100			1	100
Total	44	80,0	11	20,0	55	100

The reasons the demand is not met can be explained by various reasons noted below.

Reasons the product is not available

	Hoarding by traders		Out of stock		Group total	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Ansongo	1	100			1	100
Madougou			3	100	3	100
Koro	1	50,0	1	50,0	2	100
Group total	2	33,3	4	66,7	6	100

The main cause is that businesses run out of stock. As mentioned above, this can be explained by the weak production of cotton and the low processing capacity of industrial units.

It should also be noted that businesses have small storage capabilities for livestock feed because of their financial situations and small storage areas. Before the privatization of cotton, grain processing was insured by a public enterprise that had an enormous capacity. They would make livestock feed available to the Chambers of Agriculture who could distribute them to members. Certain quantities were provided by region and the rest provided by businesses. Currently, businesses supply all of the livestock feed to the organizations and their members.

The provision of veterinary care

The privatization of vaccinations and other animal health related procedures led to the creation of private authorized retailers in different regions of the country. The following table lists the actors that provide veterinary services for the organizations.

Veterinary service providers

	Veterinary		Private authorized dealer		Group total	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Facala	1	25,0	3	75,0	4	100
Djenne			2	100	2	100
Madiama	1	33,3	2	66,7	3	100
Gao	8	88,9	1	11,1	9	100
Goumzoureye	8	100			8	100
Soni Aliber	4	100			4	100
Tonka	15	100			15	100
Gossi	3	25,0	9	75,0	12	100
Ansongo			17	100	17	100
Bara			8	100	8	100
Madougou			1	100	1	100
Group total	40	48,2	43	51,8	83	100

The private dealers are used most often by organizations to treat their animals (almost 52% of cases). But in the case where private and state structures overlap, organizations rely more on the state. The private dealers are most common in Gao, whereas state organizations are most used in Tombouctou. There is more of a split in Mopti, with a tendency towards the private enterprise.

Provisions of fodder for organizations

Herders give fodder from different sources to their animals. The following table gives the different sources of fodder given by herders.

Providers of fodder to the organization

	Sellers (masc)	Natural	Sellers (fem)	Group total

	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Facala	4	100					4	100
Djenne	2	100					2	100
Madiama	3	100					3	100
Gao	2	22,2	1	11,1	6	66,7	9	100
Goumzoureye	8	100					8	100
Soni Aliber	4	100					4	100
Tonka	15	100					15	100
Gossi	7	58,3			5	41,7	12	100
Ansongo					17	100	17	100
Bara					8	100	8	100
Total	45	54,9	1	1,2	36	43,9	82	100

We notice that most members of organizations buy the fodder that they give to their animals. This fodder is bought from male and female sellers in fixed locations or from mobile sellers. The fodder is fresh or dry bourgou, pterocarpus (for small ruminants), cram cram, etc... The fodder can be found in nature and individuals can gather it to sell. It is sold by heap or bundle. The selling and buying is done individually. An organization can hire someone to gather fodder and pay them accordingly (often by day).

The bourgou is gathered in water whereas the other fodder is gathered in dry environments. There can be several middlemen in the gathering and selling: those who go into the woods to gather it, the buyers and those who store it, and sellers.

In the winter, the high fodder is gathered and given to animals without being preserved. The populations only know how to store it by drying it in hangers or on the roofs of houses; silage is not widely known.

Other forms of fodder sold are tree pods (acacia albida) for small ruminants, the tops of peanuts or cowpeas (generally for small ruminants) and the leaves and stalks of grains (for larger livestock). The tops of cowpeas and peanuts are dried and conserved before being sold and bring a substantial profit for sellers.

In the table we notice that the proportions of male and female sellers of fodder are almost equal. This can be explained by the fact that the sale of dry fodder involves women more often and the gathering and selling of fodder involves men.

The largest constraint is the availability of fodder. The following table gives organization's answers about the availability of fodder during the entire year.

Availability of products throughout the year

	Yes		No		Group total	
	Effectif	%	Effectif	%	Effectif	%
Facala	4	100			4	100
Djenne	2	100			2	100
Madiama	3	100			3	100
Gao	9	100			9	100
Goumzoureye	7	87,5	1	12,5	8	100
Soni Aliber	4	100			4	100

Tonka	15	100			15	100
Gossi	12	100			12	100
Ansongo	16	94,1	1	5,9	17	100
Bara	7	87,5	1	12,5	8	100
Konna	6	100			6	100
Fatoma	12	100			12	100
Madougou	1	25,0	3	75,0	4	100
Koro	1	33,3	2	66,7	3	100
Group total	99	92,5	8	7,5	107	100

In the table we note that certain communes say that the fodder is available during the entire year. This is only true in the regions of Mopti, Gao and Tombouctou. But this answer merits particular attention: in the high season the animals have to go to the high zones and bourgou so the principal fodder of this zone has time to develop. So even if it is present it is not totally available. Also, the organizations think that there is always fodder available in nature regardless of its accessibility. There are often conflicts about access to fodder (bourgoutieres) between communities that use it.

The fact that 92.5% responded positively to the availability of fodder could indicate an error. Even if the fodder is available, accessibility is a problem that leads us to question its availability.

On the whole, the organizations are weak on several fronts: management capabilities, lobbying, and acquisition and utilization of information. The following table gives the training needs of organizations in the study areas.

	Roles and responsibilities of OPs		Management techniques for OPs		Negotiation techniques with partners		Roles and responsibilities of the OP/ negotiation techniques of OP		Roles and responsibilities of OP/ negotiation techniques with partners		Management techniques/ Negotiation techniques		Roles/ Responsibilities of the OP, negotiation techniques with partners		Group total	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
FacaLla	3	75			1	25									4	100
Djenne													2	100	2	100
Madiama													3	100	3	100
Gao			5	55,6	4	44,4									9	100
Goumzoureye	3	37,5	2	25	3	37,5									8	100
Soni Aliber			2	50	2	50									4	100
Tonka	8	53,3					3	20	4	26,7					15	100
Gossi	3	25,0	4	33,3			4	33,3					1	8,3	12	100
Ansongo	4	23,5	11	64,7	2	11,8									17	100
Bara	3	37,5	3	37,5	2	25									8	100
Konna													6	100	6	100
Fatoma			3	25									9	75	12	100
Madougou					3	60					2	40			5	100
Koro					2	50					2	50			4	100
Group total	24	22	30	27,5	19	17,4	7	6,4	4	3,7	4	3,7	21	19,3	109	100

The organizations have the most need for trainings on management and the roles and responsibilities of members. These trainings can be given alone or combined. That is to say that the organizations can be trained in management techniques only or by combining the management techniques with the roles and responsibilities or with negotiation techniques.

In the zone, organizations have very little training, especially women's groups. This is most likely attributed to the choice of leaders which is based on social standing rather than the intrinsic capacity of the person. The organizations are often formed by one influential person in the area (head of the land, village chief, etc...). Consequently, the organization benefits him and his family the most.

However, despite the need for training to member's build capacity, the organizations work with information to carry out their activities in different markets. The following table gives the sources of information used by the organizations.

Information sources for the organization

	Collection market		Gathering Market		Exportation Market		Radio		Meeting		Collection Market/Gathering Market		Group total	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Facala							1	25	1	25	2	50	4	100
Djenne											2	100	2	100
Madiama					1	33,3					2	66,7	3	100
Gao	9	100											9	100
Goumzoureye	8	100											8	100
Soni Aliber	4	100											4	100
Tonka	9	60	3	20							3	20	15	100
Gossi			9	75							3	25	12	100
Ansongo	12	70,6	4	23,5	1	5,9							17	100
Bara	4	50	4	50									8	100
Madougou			4	80							1	20	5	100
Koro											3	100	3	100
Group total	46	51,1	24	26,7	2	2,2	1	1,1	1	1,1	16	17,8	90	100

The main sources of information for herders' organization members are markets. Radio and television or newspapers and other sources are not often used. Among the markets, the collection markets are most important for transferring information to members for several reasons, mainly because most members often go to these markets.

On the other hand, the public or private media are not used because members are illiterate, have limited access to information because it is conveyed in a language they do not speak or because they do not have access to a network to get the information.

Meetings should be a time to exchange information but often aren't because they happen infrequently and often only when groups need to review or make a report before the arrival of donor groups or surveillance teams.

Organization members are interested in certain information about the markets. The following table lists the elements that concern the herders' organization members.

Pertinent information to the organization

	Prices		Supply		Demand		Clients		Price/supply		Price/demand		Price/clients		Price/supply/demand		Group total	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Facala									3	75					1	25	4	100
Djenne											2	100					2	100
Madiama	2	66,7					1	33,3									3	100
Gao	6	66,7	1	11,1			1	11,1			1	11,1					9	100
Goumzoureye	5	62,5									3	37,5					8	100
Soni Aliber	4	100															4	100
Tonka	6	40									9	60					15	100
Gossi	3	25											9	75			12	100
Ansongo	10	58,8	2	11,8	3	17,6	2	11,8									17	100
Bara	3	37,5	1	12,5	2	25	2	25									8	100
Madougou									1	25					3	75	4	100
Koro															4	100	4	100
Group total	39	43,3	4	4,4	5	5,6	6	6,7	4	4,4	15	16,7	9	10	8	8,9	90	100

The organization's members are interested in the prices, the presence of external businessmen, the number of animals in the market, etc... The price is the most important elements for members because they are all buyers and sellers of animals.

Organizations or their members often encounter problems when buying or selling ; the most frequent are mentioned in the following table.

Main difficulties faced by the organization

	None		Lack of space		Lack of training		High price of livestock feed		High price of animals		Poor sales		Lack of financial means		Lack of training/high price of livestock feed		Group total	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Facala			3	75			1	25									4	100
Djenne															2	100	2	100
Madiama					2	66,7	1	33,3									3	100
Gao					1	11,1	1	11,1	1	11,1	2	22,2	3	33,3	1	11,1	9	100
Goumzoureye	1	12,5					4	50					3	37,5			8	100
Soni Aliber					1	25							3	75			4	100
Tonka	3	20,0					3	20					9	60			15	100
Gossi					1	8,3							10	83,3	1	8,3	12	100
Ansongo					4	23,5							13	76,5			17	100
Bara					1	12,5							4	50	3	37,5	8	100
Madougou													5	100			5	100
Koro					2	50							2	50			4	100
Group total	4	4,4	3	3,3	12	13,2	10	11	1	1,1	2	2,2	52	57,1	7	7,7	91	100

Most of the organizations studied have problems with the markets and in the course of carrying out their activities. The problems can be summarized as follows: lack of training of members, lack of financial means for the organization so that it can start lucrative activities, the high price of inputs (livestock feed) and the lack of understanding of the market.

The organizations often don't have access to financial institutions because of their status (they are often associations which do not have legal status). These organizations cannot show a bank file (lack of means to hire a consultant). The risk to financial institutions is often high; the risks include the dependence on uncertain weather patterns (rain and rivers flooding), the high levels of mobility of the producers and animals, and the lack of knowledge of production and selling techniques.

Trainings given by projects or NGOs that help beneficiaries often happens without giving adequate consideration to a real need. They discuss the performance criteria of support structures that want to reach the goals that are listed in their framework.

A lack of space is often mentioned by the organizations because as a result of a reduction in rainfall and flooding, farmers are now occupying land to the detriment of herding. This often results in deadly conflict between communities.

Despite the constraints mentioned, numerous opportunities are available to organizations. The following table gives the opportunities available to herders' organizations in the area.

Opportunities available to organizations

	None		Infrastructure presence		External sales/technique mastery		Access to credit at the BNDA		Group total	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Facala	2	50	2	50					4	100
Djenne			2	100					2	100
Madiama	1	33,3	2	66,7					3	100
Gao	2	22,2	6	66,7	1	11,1			9	100
Goumzoureye	2	25	2	25	3	37,5	1	12,5	8	100
Soni Aliber	1	25	2	50			1	25	4	100
Tonka	3	20	9	60	3	20			15	100
Gossi			10	83,3			2	16,7	12	100
Ansongo					17	100			17	100
Bara					8	100			8	100
Madougou							1	100	1	100
Koro	2	66,7					1	33,3	3	100
Group total	13	15,1	35	40,7	32	37,2	6	7	86	100

Certain organizations say there aren't opportunities for them because either the question was poorly asked or it was not addressed to the right person. In our opinion, all the organizations in the zone have opportunities to improve their working conditions, their access to financial and technical resources, and to undertake lucrative activities.

The organizations have access to several partners in the study area, as can be seen in the table below.

Organizational partners

	No partners		NGOs		Banks		Private Veterinarians		Local government representative		Gov't technical offices		NGOs/private veterinarians		NGOS/banks/private veterinarians		Group total	
	Tot.	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%	Tot	%
Facola													1	25,0	3	75,0	4	100
Djenne											2	100					2	100
Madiama									1	33,3	2	66,7					3	100
Gao	1	11,1	8	88,9													9	100
Goumzoureye	2	25,0	5	62,5	1	12,5											8	100
Soni Aliber	2	50,0	2	50,0													4	100
Tonka	6	40,0	9	60,0													15	100
Gossi			12	100													12	100
Ansongo	3	17,6	4	23,5	6	35,3	2	11,8	1	5,9					1	5,9	17	100
Bara	5	62,5	2	25,0					1	12,5							8	100
Madougou			1	100													1	100
Koro					1	100											1	100
Total	19	22,6	43	51,2	8	9,5	2	2,4	3	3,6	4	4,8	1	1,2	4	4,8	84	100

Key :
Tot = total

Almost 23% of organizations say they do not have partners. The rest work with NGOs, technical offices, banks, etc.. The organizations that do not have partners were put in place by influential community leaders for their personal benefit.

Strengths and weaknesses of organizations

The organizations are influenced by the ideas of the technical offices, NGOs and partners. This is due to the lack of resources of the organizations, the level of training of members and the goals, often personal, of certain leaders. Several organizations exist in name, but are not functional because they are used by leaders to benefit from in-kind assistance, to divert funding and to pedal their influence.

The organizations that have many members can undertake collective actions and have an impact on collective buying and selling of goods and services. Thanks to their large numbers, the organizations are in a place to influence a decision if there is group cohesion.

In the north of Mali, there are many organizations that are too small to influence decisions. But in other domains where organizations are grouped into unions or federations or confederations, they have a much higher chance of being heard and influencing political discourse (OP rice and OP cotton).

The voice of the poor

The poor do not make themselves heard only by talking, but mainly by accepting decisions. Several factors like gender, age, revenue sources, property (owner or employer) create distortions between members of the different organizations and penalize the poorest. We note that the poorest are not heard because of their lack of financial or material sway. Despite the high numbers of poor people their voices are not represented in the different organizations because they do not possess livestock, an essential resource. The organizations should be a place for the poor to be heard and for this total cohesion is needed.

Conclusion

Producers' organizations and more specifically the herders' organizations are numerous in northern Mali. The level of training of the leaders of these organizations is often very low. The leaders are elected not because they are effective but because they have a high social position in the area.

The organizations are formal or non-formal. The formal organizations attract villagers more often because of the advantages that can be gained from the state or external partners. These are men's or women's organizations but they are most men's.

In their current state, organizations influence very few development policy decisions at any level. Activities undertaken by herders are centered on the acquisition of livestock feed. Price decisions, market attendance, protests are undertaken at an individual level.

The FBEVIM tries to help organizations make decisions that allow them to add value to their activities and to organize value chains. Currently, the organizations need help building capacity to be more efficient in their activities.

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